1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

inches each; scrape all thoroughly that no part be omitted; the *ndenimana* should be nethermost, the mangrove between, and the greenheart of India on top. The ointment; four leaves of *wavoti* laid with the stems alternately; then cut up with scissors and add oil; warm it in four leaves of *kura one*. Tapu: stepping over running water.

Sasala.—A superficial pain, as of the pricking of the skin. Comes on when there are heavy black clouds. Dr. B. C. Corney says "roughly speaking *sasala* means either flying muscular pains, or pains caused by *lymphangitis*." It also applies to neuralgia.

Scua.—Either the name of a cure or of a disease. Remedy: chew four banyan leaves; dab the ears, then rub; apply for four days. Tapu: wind and sun. No kava is offered to spirits, nor was it ever the custom to do so. The remedy belongs to the family in Waitambu. My informant learned it from his mother, who got it from her mother, who stroked his hand as she gave it to him. Another man could not use the remedy: it would not be efficacious (*mana*). My informant was reluctant to disclose his knowledge of the cure.

Ngata (*snake*).—A term applied to various diseases, so called because they begin in the legs and rise to the stomach, when the patient vomits. "It is only the snake in the abdomen that does so." A short snake is believed to possess the hand (*ngata leka tu i linga*). Remedy from the Moala notebook: Leaves of *walai* and the top shoot of a reed; bring them home, pound, and drink. No tapu.

Sting.—To cure a sting of the *kamboa* fish, hold the foot over a fire of grass and *sinu* leaves.

Tandoka.—An illness caused by not observing the restrictions on the diet prescribed, it may occur to one circumcised who goes about instead of lying still. Remedies: (a) *Mbele ni ndawa loa* and leaves of *matiyavi*; wrap, pound and drink. No tapu.

Wounds in the eye.—Remedy: Take four leaves of *losilosi* and four top shoots of reeds; chew together and squeeze, then pour on the eye.

Wounds of the body. Remedy: Take four new leaves of *mau*, chew and use as lotion, blow three times on it, do not blow the fourth time. Bathe on the fourth day. No tapu.

A congested bruise is called "dead blood."

Wry-neck.—It is believed that this ailment is caused by a dead tendon in the neck.

Yaws.—Elsewhere in Fiji mothers think their children ought to get yaws, or they will not be strong. I believe it is the same in Lau. Premature healing is believed to be fatal. It is said that the yaws have retreated inside. An after-effect is a sore underfoot which the natives call *suthuve* but do not connect with the disease. Sores are often said "to smell the ground," and so hurt.

Tongan Remedies

The Tongan word for remedy is *faitoo* which the Lauans make into *faito*. Tonga is a land of remedies; there are many many things that are supernaturally effective.

Fuafua (in Tongan *fuofua*) arises inside and aches inside.—A Tongan woman treated by dipping the stopper of a bottle in oil and rubbing the meatus of the ear. There is no prayer. The remedy is ineffective except when transferred. Wind and sea are tapu.

Matafa.—Explained as "the corner of the eye," the nature of the ailment was not made clear to me. Remedy: Take the stem of a *Dracaena* leaf, touch the eyeball with it, break off the tip that has touched the eye, repeating four or five times. Tapu: sun and wind.

Kulakula (Tongan, *kulokula*).—Translated as "red." I saw the treatment applied to an abscess in the arm: the leech, a woman, dipped her fingers in pounded leaves of *wolau* and smeared (*wali*) the arm lightly. This is done every day, morning and evening, perhaps for five or six consecutive days. The body may be bathed, but not

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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Boys' puberty ceremonies in Lau center around the rite of circumcision (*tevi*), or more accurately, supercision. The word *tevi* is not used in the presence of women, but the polite word, *sili* (bath), is used. The rites are not performed every year, but when the fathers of a group of four or more adolescent boys in the village are prepared to furnish the property and food required. A father judges by the growth of pubic hair of his offspring whether or not he ought to be circumcised. The age for circumcision varies among the islands, but boys are usually circumcised when they are between seven and twelve years of age. The rite takes place in harvest season when the food for the feast is ripening in the gardens. It is believed that at this time of year, when everything in nature is dying, inflammation is less likely to result. Though the operation may be performed by any man, one who has served once is likely to do so for a number of years. Each village thus has its circumciser (*matai ni veitevi* or *matai ni veisili*). The art is learned by observation and practice. In Tokalau the rite is performed in the coconut grove about 200 meters north of the village at a spot called Vanua ni Tevi (Land of Circumcision). The group of initiates is called *laualaua tevi*. Only the circumciser, the boys, and the fathers know the date. Usually only the boys and circumciser are present.

A boy is seated on a log or rock conveniently placed so that his knees are level with the hips of the circumciser, who stands in front of the boy. One of the initiates stands behind the patient and puts his arms around the boy's chest to hold him if he should faint. The circumciser then cleans the penis with tapa wrapped around a stick. Then another stick called *vekaveka* of *veka* wood wrapped with white tapa, is shoved lengthwise between the foreskin and the glans penis. The circumciser cuts lengthwise through the skin until he strikes the tapa wrapped around the *vekaveka*. Formerly a bamboo knife or a sharp shell was used, but today a razor blade is the usual cutting instrument. Lakai, the circumciser of Tokalau, says that a bamboo knife is best because the cut bleeds just enough to clean the wound and that a cut caused by a shell often heals too slowly.

Immediately after the operation, chewed hibiscus leaves (*kalakalaisoni*) are applied to the wound. The penis is then wrapped in *vevendu (Scaevola)* leaves, which have been softened by beating and scorching, then bandaged with fresh white tapa and bound, head up, to the abdomen, by means of a T-bandage of tapa (*masi loti*). When all the initiates have been circumcised, they go to one of the village men's houses, which becomes the house of circumcision (*mbure ni tevi*). They are confined there for four days, under the care of the circumciser, and their fathers provide their food. They are instructed to be quiet, to have no fear of the dark, and not to think about girls. If a boy has an erection, which under the circumstances is painful, he hangs by

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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treats boils with a special medicine (called *lolotambakau*).[61] The treatment brings the boil to a head. When it breaks it is pressed and washed with fresh hot water and the medicine is applied again. Before and after treatment the doctor washes his hands in cold water, then rubs them with special crushed leaves (*thombona*) and washes them again. Boils are lanced with a shell which has been cleaned with a glowing brand. The shell is not sharpened and is discarded after the operation.

Formerly surgery was practiced more frequently than it is today. An inflated belly was cut open with a bamboo knife sharpened by breaking off the edge. No method of binding together the edges of the incision was known, but medicines were used to aid the healing process.[62]

To induce pregnancy, Wondo, a woman of Undu, puts scrapings of bark of the *sikethi* and *vauvau* (*Hibiscus*) into a medicine bag, soaks the bag in water and squeezes it. The potion is drunk by the patient twice a day. If after two months the woman fails to conceive the doctor takes her into the lagoon and makes a digital examination of the woman's vagina. If displacement of the uterus is indicated the doctor attempts to correct it by manipulation. The woman and her husband are then given medicine (called *wai ni luvea*) to drink. The recipe, made from the bark of a tree, is a secret handed down from mother to daughter.

The native Lauan theory of disease with its emphasis on superhuman causes and cures is directly opposed to that underlying modern medicine. There is probably medicinal value in some of the herbs used, but this problem has not been investigated. The measure of success which the witch doctor attains lies to a great extent in his influence on the mind of the patient. Moreover, the native system of medicine is deeply

[61] The leaves of the *uthi* (*Evodia hortensis*) tree, crushed between the palms of the hands, are placed in a bag made of oiled white barkcloth. This is taken to the patient and the leaves are removed from the bag and rubbed on the affected area.

[62] One of these was the fruit of the *sikethi* (*Aleurites moluccana*) tree. After the skin of the fruit had been removed it was roasted in the fire, cooled, and rubbed on the wound.